RAILROADS PUT TO SEVERE TEST

Panic of 1893 Drove Many of Them Into Bankruptcy.

SIX YEARS POVERTY

Great Rush of Business in 1899 Caught Them Unprepared.

COULDN'T GET CAPITAL

People Led by Roosevelt Began Attack That Has Been Kept Up.

By LOGAN G. McPHERSON.

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To understand just what is the matter with the railways to-day it is necessary to begin with the situation that confronted them in the panic of twenty years ago. During the six years that followed the financial breakdown of 1893, the traffic of the railways so fell off that over a fourth of the railway mileage of the country went into bankruptcy, and many of the strongest companies kept out of receivership only by the exercise of severest economy. All over the country freight cars by the thousand were standing empty on sidetracks; locomotives by the hundred were idle in roundhouses; everywhere there was insufficient expenditure upon roadbed and track; the forces of employees in every department of the service were cut to the lowest number that could keep things going. Shippers pressed the railways for reductions in rates.

During a time of depression is when the railways ought to put their equipment in the best of repair and build up their track and structures. They ought to take advantage of the low wages and low prices for material for making extensions and improvements. Though but little understood, it is a fact, however, that the income and outgo of the railways with but few exceptions is at all times so nearly balanced that there is seldom a surplus available for expenditures that do not promise immediate return. For capital expenditure the railways are nearly always obliged to seek new capital.

Surpluses Cut Down.

In the six years that succeeded 1893, surpluses not only were whittled down and exhausted but new capital was not obtainable. During those six years the country was saturated with pessimism. It was the common cry that the manufacturing capacity exceeded any probable demand for a generation to come. Right and left it was said that the pauper labor of Europe made it impossible for the United States to continue in the world's markets; politicians and muckraking writers uttered dire misgivings as to the oncoming competition of the awakening East, the so-called yellow peril of the Orient. Under these conditions a railroad manager who would have endeavored to obtain new capital for extending track and extending equipment, for increasing the capacity of his railroad beyond immediate needs, not only would have been unable to obtain the money but would have been deemed a lunatic. The energies of the great bankers were not then devoted to raising new capital in preparation for the future but to the readjustment of existing capital issues that the railroads might be kept running at the time.

That the pessimism was without foundation was proved by the course of events. Yet at the time the despairing utterances were believed to portray the conditions.

The resumption of business that began in 1898 was under terrific headway in 1899. Mills and factories that long had been idle were working night and day; the farms burst forth in plenty. Although but a few years before in the great cities public and private charity was feeding thousands of workingmen who could not secure employment, there was now work for multiple the number of men that were available. Capital flowed into new investment like the rush of vernal torrent. Millions and millions of dollars were ready to open new mines, to build new mills and factories and to provide new machinery and to erect new skyscrapers, new hotels and theatres.

Came on Them Unaware.

This burst of business came upon the railroads pretty much as the Spanish war came upon the War Department. President McKinley held up the war to give the Department a chance to get ready, but there was nobody to hold up the flood of traffic until the railroads were ready. It hit them fore and aft and amidships. What seemed like a spring freshet in 1900 had become a raging torrent in 1901. There is no business in this country that does not have to rely upon the service of the railroads and it is hardly an exaggeration to say that at that time there was not a business in the country to which the railways rendered service that was satisfactory to those engaged in its direction. Raw material coming in and finished product going out were subjected to unwonted delay. There was not a mill, or a mine, or a factory, or a farm that was not clamoring for more cars and prompter service. Retail stores were complaining and even the householder awaiting a shipment of furniture had his patience exhausted.

At that time the railways were not even given credit for doing the best they could. They were moving an unprecedented volume of business, and the country was prospering as never before. Mines and mills had never turned out so much; the stocks in wholesale and retail stores had never been so heavy. Yet the railways did not have tracks enough, cars enough, locomotives enough, or employees enough, and there were manufacturing plants that were stealing away their men at the same time they were complaining of their service. The railways were so clogged that additional traffic meant a loss instead of a gain.

Little Money for Railways.

The railway managers learned that they needed more capital, that there was immediate use for every dollar they could get, but when they asked for millions instead of the hundreds of millions which they really needed, the country was aghast. Money had poured into mines, mills and factories, and farms were rising steadily in value, but when the poor dog of the railways asked for a bone it was kicked and cuffed. Rails, cars and locomotives had been ordered, but the factories also were clogged. This condition lasted the greater part of three years. The business reaction in 1903 brought some relief.

In these three years the railways did a great deal toward expanding their facilities; rails, cars and locomotives at last did come, and they came in mighty volume. But there were respects in which the railways were handicapped by the very advances which they were making. For example, it was in about 1895 or 1896 that were built the first steel freight cars with capacity of forty and fifty tons, exceeding by about two-thirds that of the cars commonly in use.

About the same time were designed the new locomotives with tractive power about two-thirds greater than that of those in use. As these cars and locomotives came into service it was found that in many cases roadbed and bridges were not strong enough for the heavier weights and that the cast iron wheels which had been adequate for the older types of equipment were not strong enough to support the new. Thus was necessitated a general rebuilding.

The heavy demands of the traffic compelled the use of every car that could be placed in service, and thus old wooden cars were run in the same trains with the new steel cars; the old cast iron wheels for which no satisfactory substitute was immediately found were the cause of many a wreck. The necessity for the rapid increase in their forces compelled the railways to employ the best recruits that could be obtained, but who sometimes were without sufficient experience.

Angry at the Railroads.

Most people not only did not appreciate the difficulties of the railways, but were largely not aware of them. They were angry at the railroads. They had had a good deal against the dog anyhow, and just wanted to kick it.

At this time there was in the Presidency of the United States a man who understood the mind of the average American citizen. The candidate had pledged himself to call a special session of Congress to revise the tariff, but during the winter found that he could not get anywhere with any attempt at revision. But he had to do something. He had gathered the storm clouds and could not let them pass away without having the lightning strike somewhere. His intuitive sense of the popular mind led him to become centre rush in the attack on the railroads. About this time the writer of this article said to a gentleman of distinguished reputation in whose class at college the Chief Executive of the nation had been that the same Chief Executive evidently knew nothing about the railroads.

"No, and he knows nothing about the tariff or about finance," was the reply.

The Federal legislation shaped by the houses of Congress has much to commend it and the Interstate Commerce Commission admittedly is a fine body of men. There is no criticism here of the Federal legislation or of the commission except to suggest that neither would be human if it were perfect. The trouble was that the attack fomented by the President of the United States was taken up by the State Legislatures, and they have been kicking the dog ever since. They have not confined their energies to the regulation of the railways, but have passed bill after bill prescribing detail of railway administration oftentimes without giving the railway officers a fair chance to be heard.

Rush Has Continued.

The railroads at the beginning of this century were quite unprepared, and through no fault of their own, for a rush of traffic such as the country had not known. They have been forced to renew their facilities in the face of this onrush, which has continued except during two brief periods of reaction. They have been harassed in obtaining requisite capital and by legislation much of which has been injurious in its effect. Under these conditions the railways have accomplished a great deal, but the development has been very uneven. They have done the things that they were obliged to do to meet the immediate demands of traffic and the immediate behests of legislators. They have not had the capital or the opportunity to do many things that must be done, which the people must allow them to have the means for doing, and which the people must not expect them to do unless they have the means.

HERE TO STUDY FIRE FIGHTING.

Rotterdam Chief Amazed by Speed of Kenlon's Broadway Dash.

Chief A. J. Ten Hope of the Rotterdam, Holland, volunteer fire brigade has been in New York for a week getting pointers on fire fighting ashore and afloat. After riding with Chief Kenlon on midnight alarms and finding out how fireboats protect the waterfront, he says he has learned more in six days than could be picked up in any European city in a year.

Mr. Ten Hope is one of the nine chiefs who head the Rotterdam force. He said yesterday that Rotterdam had 1,800 men, fifty-two hand engines and five automobile engines with steam pumps. Last year the biggest fire loss was $8,000 and Rotterdam's insurance rate is very low. But the high building craze has at last reached the Dutch city, and since a twelve story building is already projected Mr. Ten Hope and the eight other chiefs wish to know how to handle skyscraper fires.

Not only are the Rotterdam chiefs unsalaried, but they have to pay their men from their own pockets. The first three companies to respond to an alarm get a total of $44 in bonuses, which the first chief on the scene must pay. Twelve cents an hour is the regular pay of a fireman while actually fighting flames.

Chief Kenlon took Chief Ten Hope to Great Jones street to spend a night at Kenlon's headquarters. The Hollander was so averse to missing a possible fire that he didn't go to bed. He rode with Chief Kenlon to Broadway and Mail street, where an auto truck was burning in front of the Post Office, and was amazed by the speed of the New York chief's dash down Broadway. On another day Chief Kenlon took the visitor out on the fireboat New Yorker for a pumping exhibition. They also inspected the fireboat Duane.

Chief Ten Hope will ask the city of Rotterdam to send two chiefs to this country in September to attend the annual meeting of the International Fire Engineers.

SIX WED AT ONCE TO ALLEN STREET'S JOY

Hebrew Ritual With Moslem Dainties for Turkish Jews.

800 SEE THE NUPTIALS

Slow, Cacophonous Music; Then Baki Is Drunk to the Couples' Luck.

There is an entertainment hall with an occidental name at 73 Allen street, right where the pulse of the East Side beats hardest, in which many curious things have taken place, but never one more curious than the synchronous marriage last evening of three couples of Turkish Jews.

While Prof. San Crespi coaxed a weird andante from his kanon to the tinkling accompaniment of Mister Juda Moshe's ud, the Rev. Joseph Abravaya, dressed in all the glory of the Jewish Church, pronounced the Hebrew marriage ritual, sealing at one and the same time the nuptial fates of the six young Turks.

George Washington, undisturbed, looked down from the wall. Lincoln, at his side, smiled benignly on the proceedings, while Nathan Hale, painted in more than billposter imperfection, waved an American flag apparently in celebration of the occasion.

Guests in Many Colors.

The three brides, none of them yet 20, looked solemn. The three young bridegrooms, each 21, looked agitated. The 300 Turkish guests, seated on benches around the four walls, the men with their hats on and the women in their Saturday Sabbath splendour, didn't pay as much attention to the ceremony as to their cigarettes and their babies.

At 3 o'clock Allen street, which in the vicinage of the Grand Palace Hall is as thick with foreign Hebrews as the world at large is with romance, presented a scene of color to compare favorably with Fifth avenue at 5 in the afternoon. The color was in the gowns of the women and children who were coming from all directions to help celebrate the marriage of their countrywomen.

Already the three brides were seated in a corner of the hall on a raised dais beneath a canopy of tenement house paper roses and electric lights that sparkled forth from green, yellow, blue and red bulbs.

For the most part they were alone and apparently unfriended for, although all of the guests were present by their invitation and in their honor, scarcely a dozen out of the 300 ventured within ten feet of them. One or two of their closer relatives filed up with gloomy urbanity, kissed each bride silently on the cheek and with a waxen expression walked away.

Turkish Air to the Feast.

But all of that was according to Turkish custom. Even the Jews of that country seem to have caught some of the Mohammedan nuptial atmosphere and to consider that a woman on becoming a wife is saying farewell to a world which she has never known anyway.

If the marriage had been held near the Dardanelles, where all six principals came from, the guests would have paraded through the streets conducting the bride from her home to the abode of her bridegroom. But in Turkey it is not necessary to get a parade license from the city and to pay a fee to boot.

Those women whose attention was not wholly taken up by nursing babes did not seem so entirely indifferent to the brides as the men. They could be seen stealing furtive glances toward the dais. One almost suspected that the ninyas, the unmarried women, glanced enviously. But the moheres, the women who have passed through the tiresome ceremony of marriage, turned their broad backs and talked indifferently of a timely end to the chicken famine.

Men Shun the Elegant Bridegrooms.

In a way the bridegrooms were more snubbed than the brides. They circulated amid the throng of smoking men, but no one would talk to them. Each wore an evening vest and a dinner coat and each stayed as far from the electric lighted canopy as the size of the hall would permit.

Before the ceremony some of the ninyas danced the tjingarbi, a figure dance that originated in Spain before the Jews were driven to the Levant. A few of them danced a polka step. When one young couple of knee skirted girls broke into a turkey trot they were summarily stopped by their mammas.

It was an odd spectacle, that gathering of Turkish Jews, all of them talking a Spanish lingo corrupted since 1498, when they were driven from Spain. Some of them, it was explained very earnestly, traced their lineage back to the aristocracy of Jerusalem.

Weird Dishes and Drinks.

After the marriage there was a picnic dinner. Huge platters of pilaf, a combination of boiled rice and chicken fat, were brought in. The paklava, a concoction of grease, sugar, syrup and bread, took most of the favors among the children. The moheres and their husbands drank baki, a liquor something like eau de vie, to the good health and fortune of the newlyweds, while the younger people satisfied themselves by toasting in lemonade.

It was the first time in the memory of Little Turkey that a triple marriage has been celebrated. The East Side's press agent (did you know the East Side has one?) hinted that the high cost of living had influenced the three couples to lessen expenses by combination, but that report was not exactly fair to the bridegrooms, who spread out their palms and explained that all six were married together because all had come from the Dardanelles district and were the closest of friends.

One of the bridegrooms is a tailor, another is a hat man in an uptown restaurant and the third is a clerk in a Fourteenth street department store. All three brides have been working in garment factories and did not strike.

Here are the names of the principals: Joseph Agoado of 88 Rivington street married Miss Annula Fiz of 55 East 110th street.

Samuel Varom of 179 Eldridge street married his cousin, Miss Benvernita Varom.

Nissom Abravaya of 137 Orchard street married Miss Clara Levy of the same address.

HUSBAND, SUED, SAYS 'SHE HYPNOTIZED ME'

Married Because of "Baneful" Influence and Threats He Alleges.

WAS ENGAGED TO ANOTHER

Lived With Her Only 24 Hours, When, He Says, Normal Condition Returned.

A husband's defence of hypnotism to a charge of abandoning his wife the day after he married her is made in a suit for separation brought in the Supreme Court by Mrs. Ethel P. Hughes against Norman A. Hughes, Jr., a bookkeeper for the American Express Company, who lives with his mother at 692 East Thirty-seventh street, Brooklyn.

Mrs. Hughes applied to Supreme Court Justice Gerard for alimony and said that her husband married her April 25 last, deserted her the next day and on April 28 advertised that he would not be responsible for her debts. She alleged that he received a large salary, has several bank accounts and was able to pay $50 a week alimony and $500 counsel fee.

In reply Hughes said he met the plaintiff a year ago through a flirtation and paid her attentions subsequently, but on no occasion promised to marry her. He said that some months ago, after he had been drinking in the plaintiff's house, she told him she had agreed to marry her, but he couldn't remember it.

"As a matter of fact I was engaged for a number of years to marry Miss Belle Duffy, for whom I have the highest regard," said Hughes. "A license had been issued for my marriage to her at the time I married the plaintiff."

Hughes said he had not been in good health for a long time prior to April 23 and was much disturbed over his association with the plaintiff and over his fear that his fiancee would discover it as a result of the plaintiff's threats. He said it was while he was under the "baleful" influence of the plaintiff that he married her, but "I immediately regretted it and left her within twenty-four hours because I believed she was not fit to be my wife." Hughes makes this further charge against the plaintiff:

"Prior to my acquaintance with the plaintiff I was at all times strictly moral in character and temperate in habits, but by various arts, tricks and devices, and beguiled by this plaintiff through the aid of narcotics and stimulants, she caused this defendant to forget his engagement to Miss Duffy and did by the aid of said narcotics and stimulants cause defendant to marry her. When defendant's normal condition returned, and realizing the subtle influence, hypnotic or otherwise, that plaintiff had exercised, he refused longer to live with her or recognize her as his wife."

Hughes said that the plaintiff has an income from stocks and bonds and that she told him she recently sold a parcel of property in Boston for a large sum. He said he has only $3 a week left after his living expenses are paid, but the court directed him to give the plaintiff $3 a week and $50 counsel fee.

DUELL MEETING TO BE HELD.

Promoters Insist That Sulzer Will Speak Despite Shearn.

Charles H. Duell, Jr., chairman of the Non-Partisan Direct Primary League, issued a statement yesterday taking Clarence J. Shearn to task for saying that the meeting scheduled for Wednesday night at Carnegie Hall in the interest of Gov. Sulzer's direct primary campaign had been commercialized by the league. He declared further that whether Gov. Sulzer speaks or not the meeting will be held.

The Governor's direct primary war board made it known on Saturday that the Governor would not speak at Carnegie Hall. It was asserted that boxes had been sold for the meeting, advantage having been taken of the fact that Mr. Sulzer and Col. Roosevelt had been advertised to speak from the same platform. Mr. Duell says:

"No seats have been or will be sold—every man and every woman is welcome. Mr. Shearn has dared to say to me that Gov. Sulzer will not speak at Carnegie Hall on next Wednesday and that he, Shearn, would be able to prevent it. He doubtless forgets that the Governor has promised the people of this city to speak at Carnegie Hall in their behalf at that time. Gov. Sulzer has given me his word and has also verbally verified a telegram authorized by himself to this same effect."

POETRY KEEPS PARK CLEAN.

Music of Stover's Verse Halts Litter Scattering "Savages."

Park Commissioner Stover employed poetry as a weapon against park "savages" yesterday in the campaign to keep the lawns and paths of Central Park free of paper, peanut shells, banana peels and other refuse. It was said late in the day that the poetry was effective, for the park was kept remarkable clean for a pleasant Sunday.

As an auxiliary to the poetry there was a squad of ten headquarter detectives sleuthing about the park all day with summonses for lawbreakers. Thirty of these were issued for persons to appear to-day in the West Side police court.

Large posters were put at each park entrance and no eye could escape seeing the poetry, printed in red type, which began:

"Little drops of water the great ocean,
And little peanut shells great litter make."

The poster went on to say that the squirrels did not scatter the peanut shells about, but humans did and they ought to have as good manners as the animals.